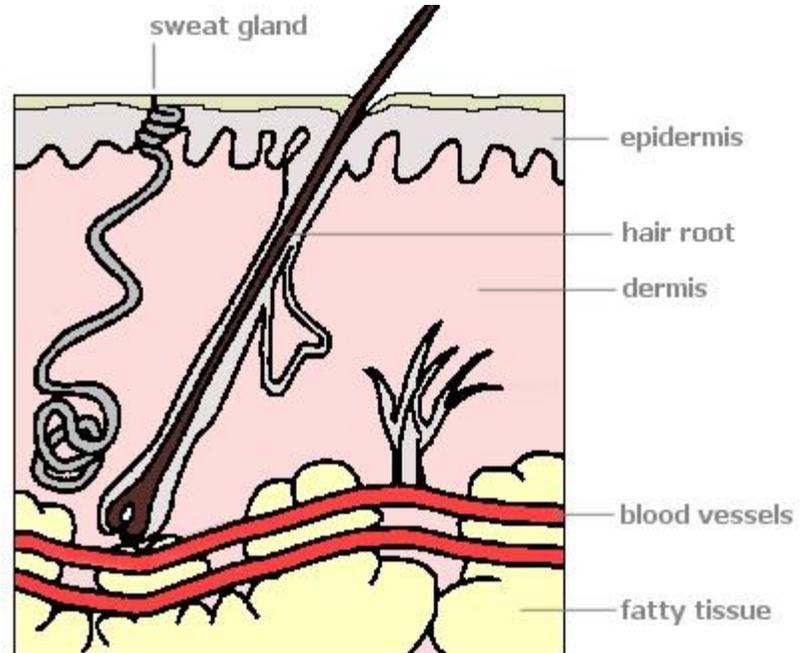




# Skin Care

The skin has two layers. The outer layer, called the epidermis, serves to protect the body from infections and germs. The second layer is called the dermis. It contains blood vessels, nerves, hair roots, fat cells and sweat glands that keep the skin alive and healthy. Under the dermis is a fatty cushion which lies on top of the muscle and bone.

The skin has many jobs. It helps to protect the body from germs and the harmful rays of the sun. It also helps to control body temperature. For example, the skin gets goose bumps and shivers when the body is cold, and sweats when the body is hot. Sweating not only helps the body cool off, but it also assists in removing waste products. The skin also helps a person to "feel" such things as hot, cold, pain and pressure.



After an injury, the skin will still protect the body but there may be changes in some of the other functions. Because there may be limited or absent feeling in certain areas, the skin will not be able to tell a person if pain is present or if an injury to a limb has happened (such as a burn, bruise or cut).

Limited or absent body movement also has many effects on the skin. Lack of movement decreases blood flow to the skin which makes it less healthy and more apt to break down (turn into a sore).

Skin sores can develop due to pressure, friction, moisture, burns or even accidents. They often happen without a person knowing it because of absent sensation to the area. Sores can easily become infected and may channel into deeper levels of muscle and bone. Healing can be difficult and may lead to future problems that require surgery and long hospital stays. Please read on for more information on the different causes and signs of skin problems.

Prevention is key! A good skin program will prevent sores.